

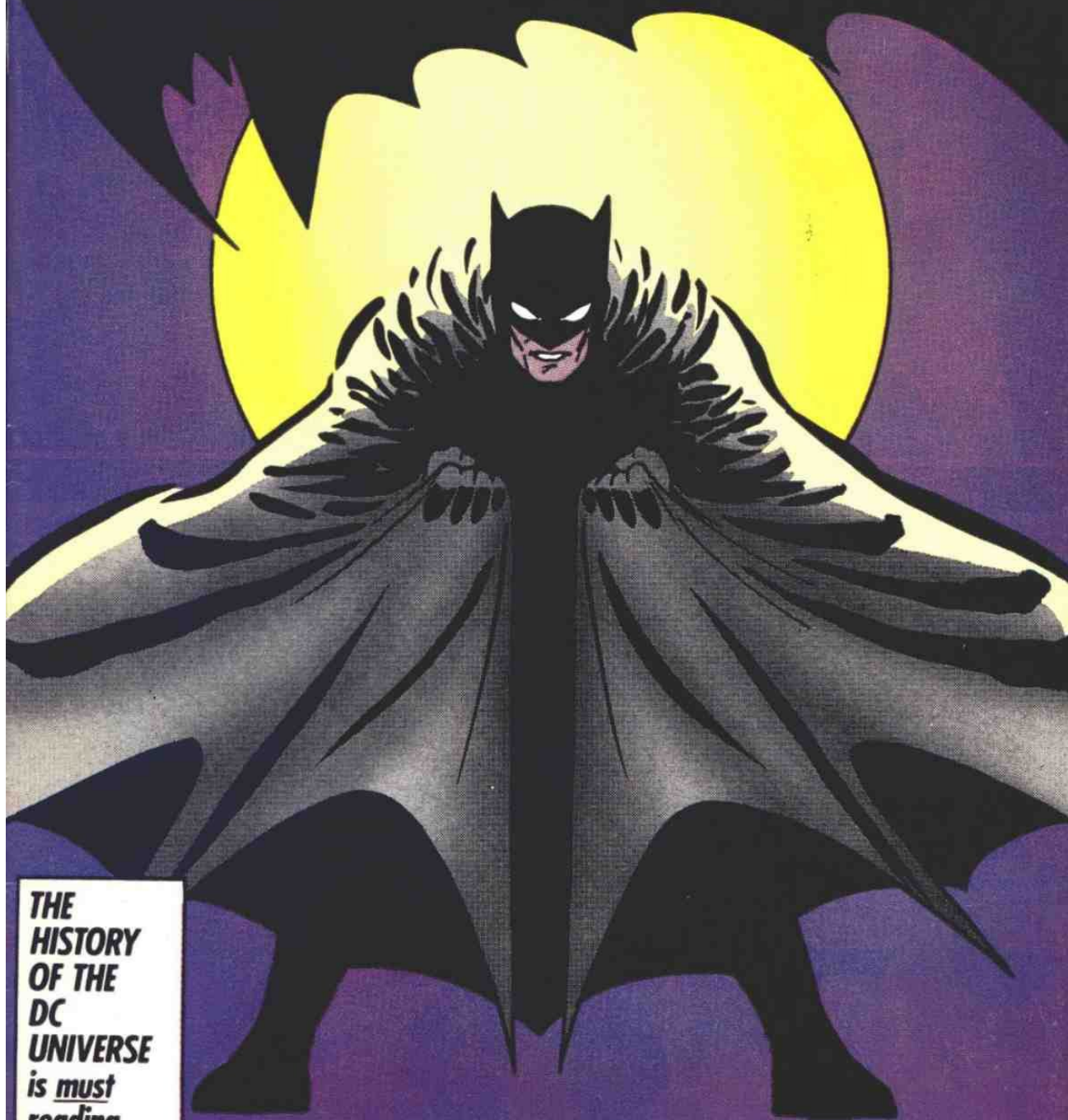


BY
FRANK MILLER
AND DAVID
MAZZUCHELLI

YEAR ONE PART 2

405
75¢
CAN. \$1.00
U.K. 40p
MAR 87

BATMAN



**THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DC
UNIVERSE**
*is must
reading*

MAZZUCHELLI

He has trained and
planned and waited
eighteen years.

He thinks he's ready...

BATMAN[®] YEAR ONE

BY
FRANK MILLER
AND
DAVID MAZZUCHELLI

Adapted from the works of
Bob Kane, Bill Finger
and Jerry Robinson

CHAPTER TWO: WAR IS DECLARED

- Richmond Lewis: Colorist
Todd Klein: Letterer
Denny O'Neil: Editor

Batman created by Bob Kane



BATMAN 405 (USPS 045-340). Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BATMAN, DC Comics, Inc., Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate \$9.00. Outside U.S.A. \$11.00 in U.S. funds. Copyright © 1986 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, Inc., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400. Printed in U.S.A. D.C. Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company 

G-2899

April 4



The day starts early with a call from Merkel about a hostage situation in Brigham Circle.

Barbara wakes up with me -- she always does, no matter how quiet I try to be -- and somehow has my coffee ready by the time I pull on my pants.



COME IN, MERKEL...

The rain has worked its magic on the wiring of my heap. Between Rice Krispy sounds I get every fourth word.

I'm two blocks from the action, my stomach lurching with the engine through backed-up traffic.

Damn rubberneckers...



NO CAN'T DON'T WANT ISN'T BLANK

Best I can tell, nobody's sure what the kidnapper wants. He isn't making much sense.

He's holding three children at gunpoint. Sounds like Merkel's got some back-ground on him...



...I SAID NO, SIR. HE HASN'T FIRED A SHOT...

...NO, SIR, NOT A CRIMINAL RECORD. GOT THE WORD FROM ARKHAM ASYLUM ...YES, SIR. ARKHAM...

...NAME'S ALBERT BLUME. DIAGNOSED PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENIC. RELEASED TWO WEEKS AGO...



SKRKK NO, SIR-- NO SKRKK OF VIOLENT SKRKK

SIR-- TROUBLE-- IT'S SKRKK

SKRKK BRANDEN SKRKK

Branden.

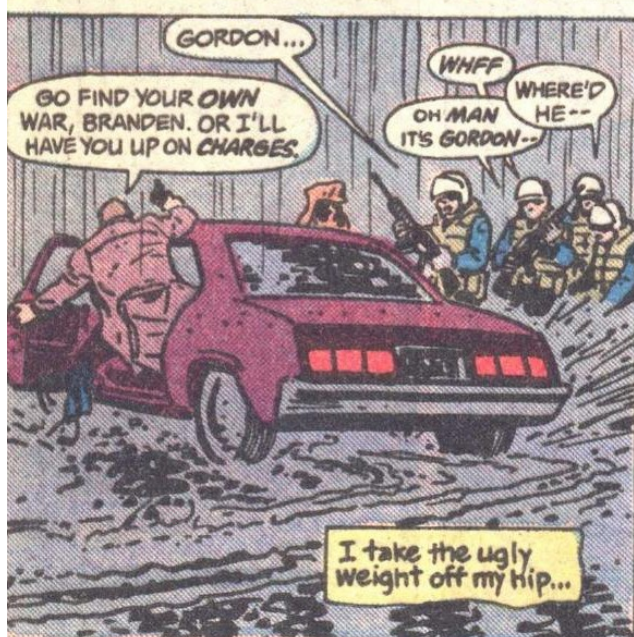


JESUS, YOU--

Coffee splashes in my lap, taking the last of the cotton from my mind.

Branden. Him and his lunatic gestapo.

It'll be a massacre.





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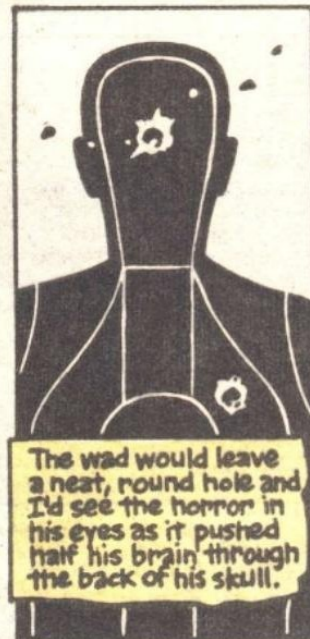
April 5

HUMILIATED ME.
IN FRONT OF MY MEN.
HUMILIATED ME.

GILLIAN B. L
COMMISSIONER
OF POLICE

NOTHING
BUT TROUBLE,
THAT ONE.

YOU DO KNOW
I SYMPATHIZE, DON'T
YOU, BRANDEN?



April 6

Another kick.

Strong boy,
little James...



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...I pray he's very strong. And smart enough to stay alive.

How did I let this happen?

How did I screw up so badly... to bring an innocent child to life...

...in a city without hope...



April 9

They call it my night off.

It starts out well enough, with the smell of Barbara's lemon chicken--

--and her fingers, kneading baby oil into my shoulders...

...Rachmaninoff, played soft... her idea... corny, but it works...



DON'T HAVE TO GO TO METROPOLIS...

...FOR A MAN OF STEEL...

...COULD USE A JACKHAMMER ON YOUR BACK...

FEELS GREAT, HONEY...



...SAID YOU'D UNPLUG IT, JIM...

HONEY, I FORGOT... I'M SORRY...



YES, SERGEANT.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD CALL THE ZOO.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I'LL GET HIM.



IT'S MERKEL. SOMETHING ABOUT A GIANT BAT.

CHICKEN WILL KEEP.

The costume works--
better than I'd
hoped.

They freeze and
stare, and give me
all the time in
the world...

...I come in close on the one
who looks the strongest--throw
him a growl, I've brought all
the way from Africa--

--and suddenly everything
falls to pieces.

The one to my left calls for
his mother--

--to my right the
other collects his
senses and leaps to
position--he'll be
trouble--

--the strong one
gets scared--too
scared--

--No--

--I'm no
killer--

--he screams--
like a girl--

--can't be
older than
fifteen--

--a child--
just a
child--

--the one I was
worried about
takes his shot--

--he's trained--
kicks got
power--

--he doesn't realize--
or he doesn't care--

--that if I let go--



--we're twenty
stories up--



--again--

--this is
getting bad--



--steady--
hold on--



--some of that
one's ribs go--

--forget him--

The television-- still
hasn't hit the street--



--doesn't matter-- hold on--

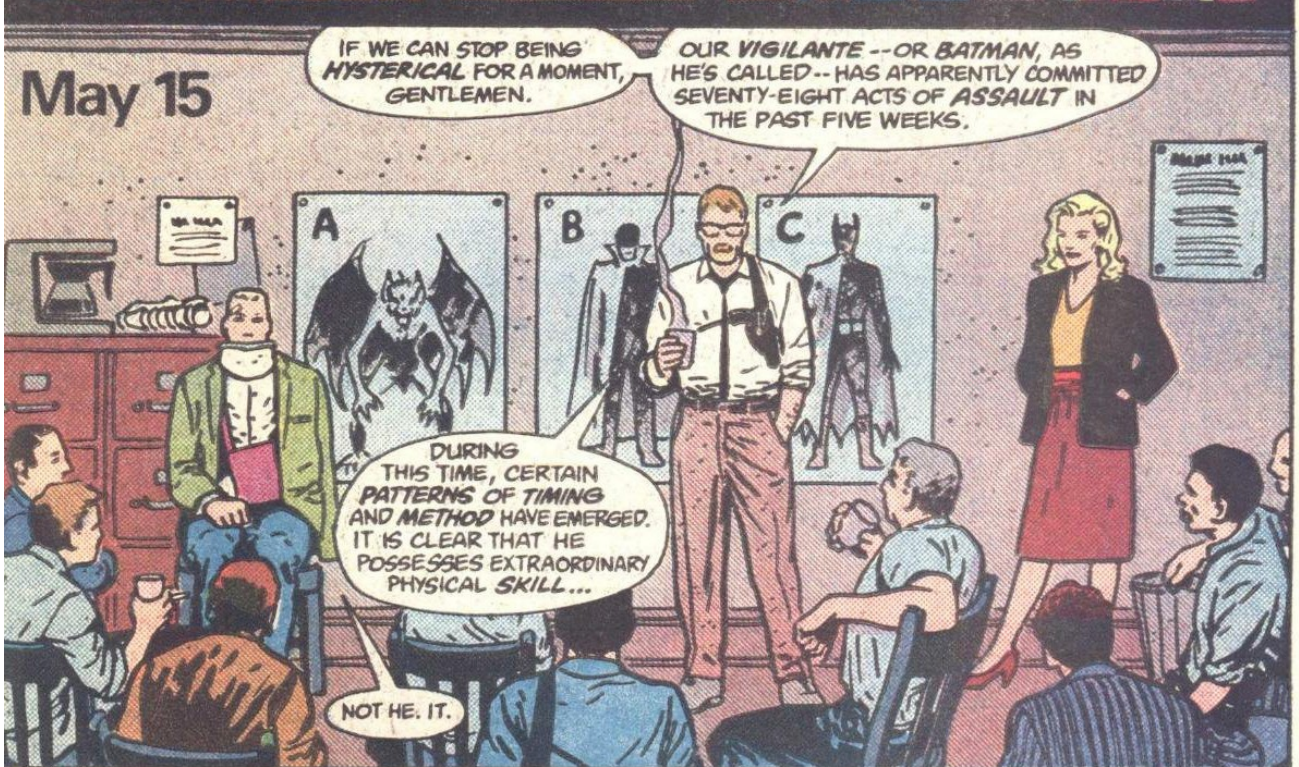
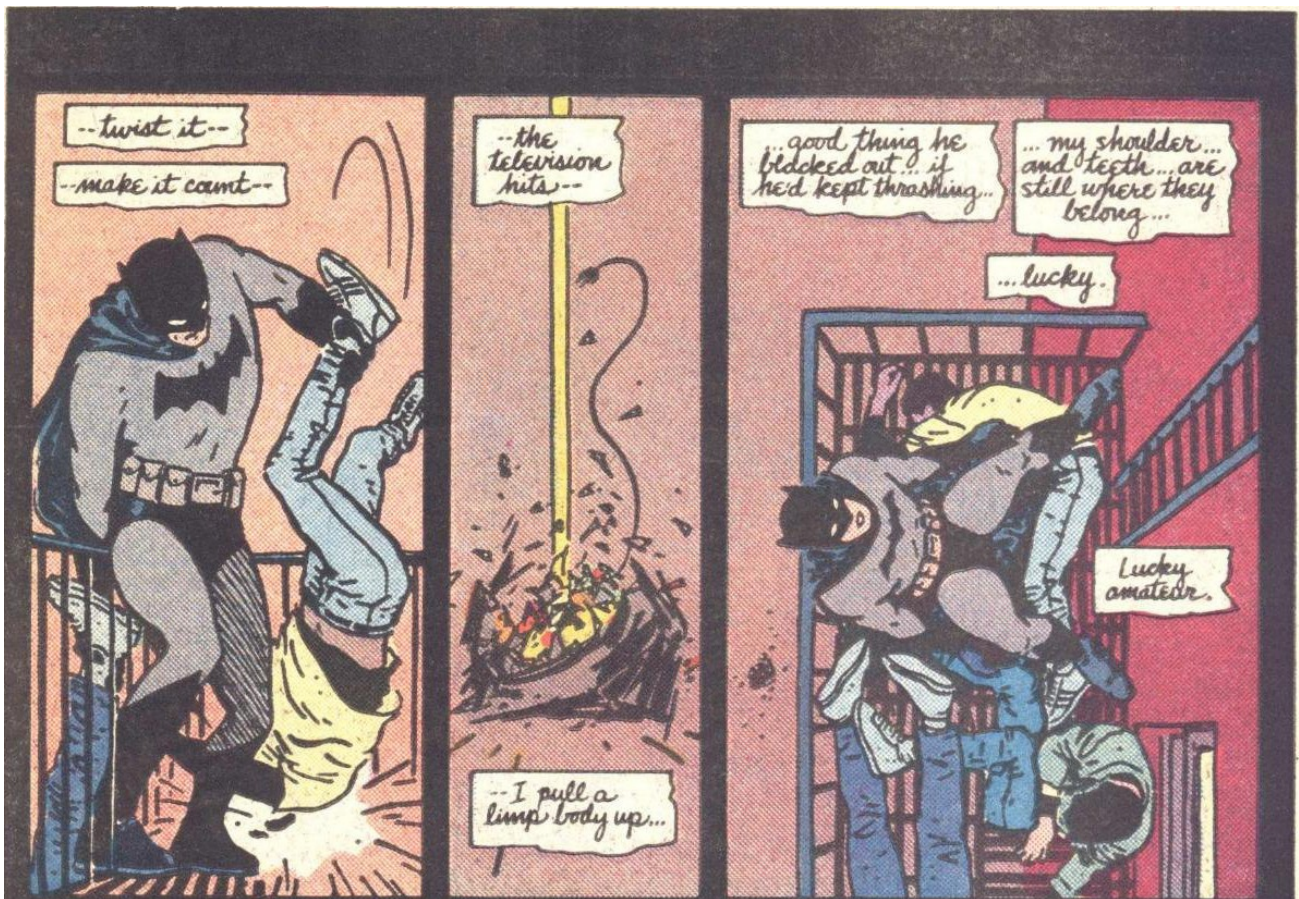
--here he
comes--

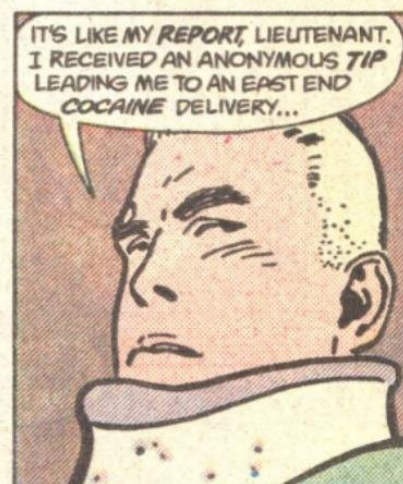
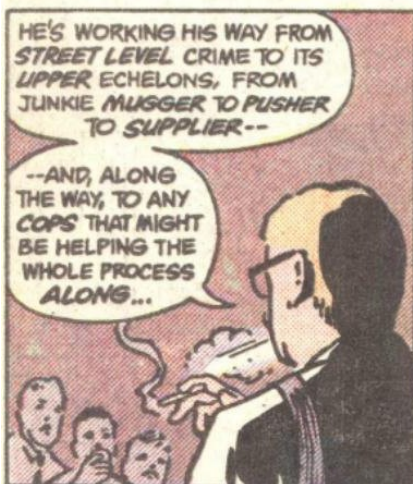
--brace--
with leg--



--now--
grab it--

Valueimpression
Placeholder







"he fired--point blank range, at the creature--"

"--and the bullet passed straight through the creature like it wasn't there--"

The snorts and giggles stop Flass cold for a second. He shoots me a look I'd like to frame and put on my wall.

"--and it started laughing..."

"...Other members of the gang drew forth their guns--something flew from the creature's hand."

"I remember noticing it had claws..."



CLAWS. RIGHT.

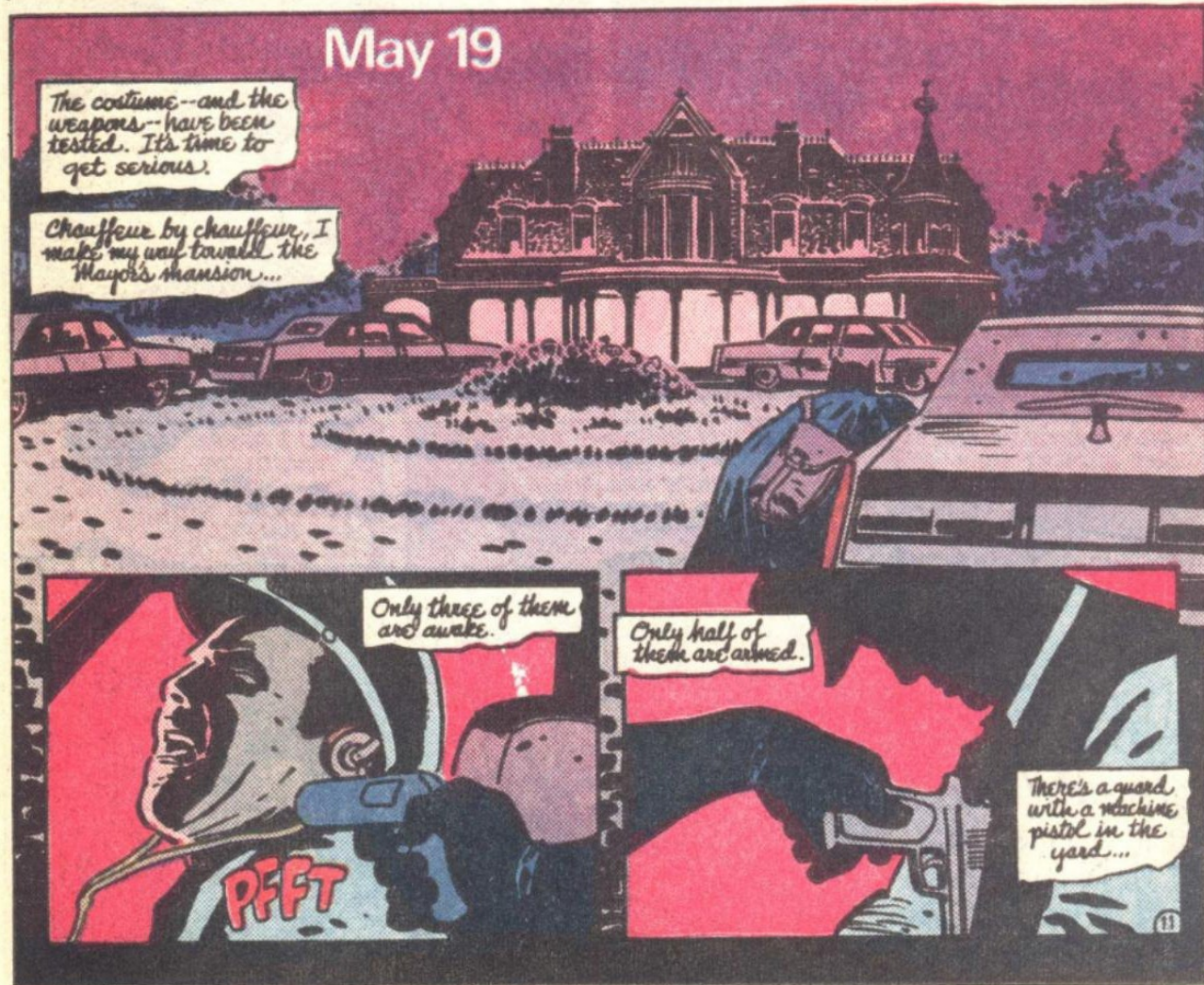
...IT WAS LITTLE DART THINGS...THEY PARALYZED THE FELONS...

...BUT ME HE SINGLED OUT...

GENTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN...

GO ON, FLASS. PLEASE.

...LITTLE DART THINGS...



May 19

The costume--and the weapons--have been tested. It's time to get serious.

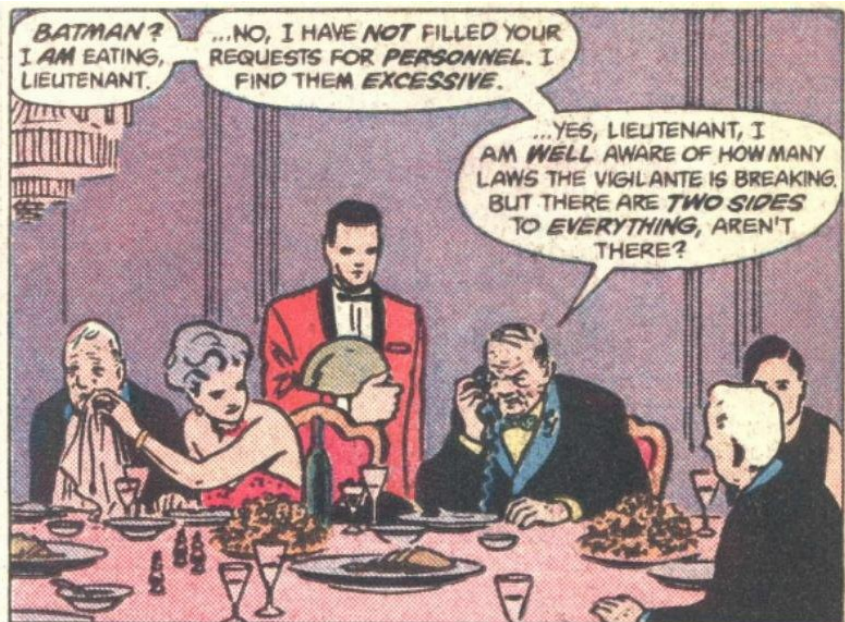
Chauffeur by chauffeur, I make my way toward the Mayor's mansion...

Only three of them are awake.

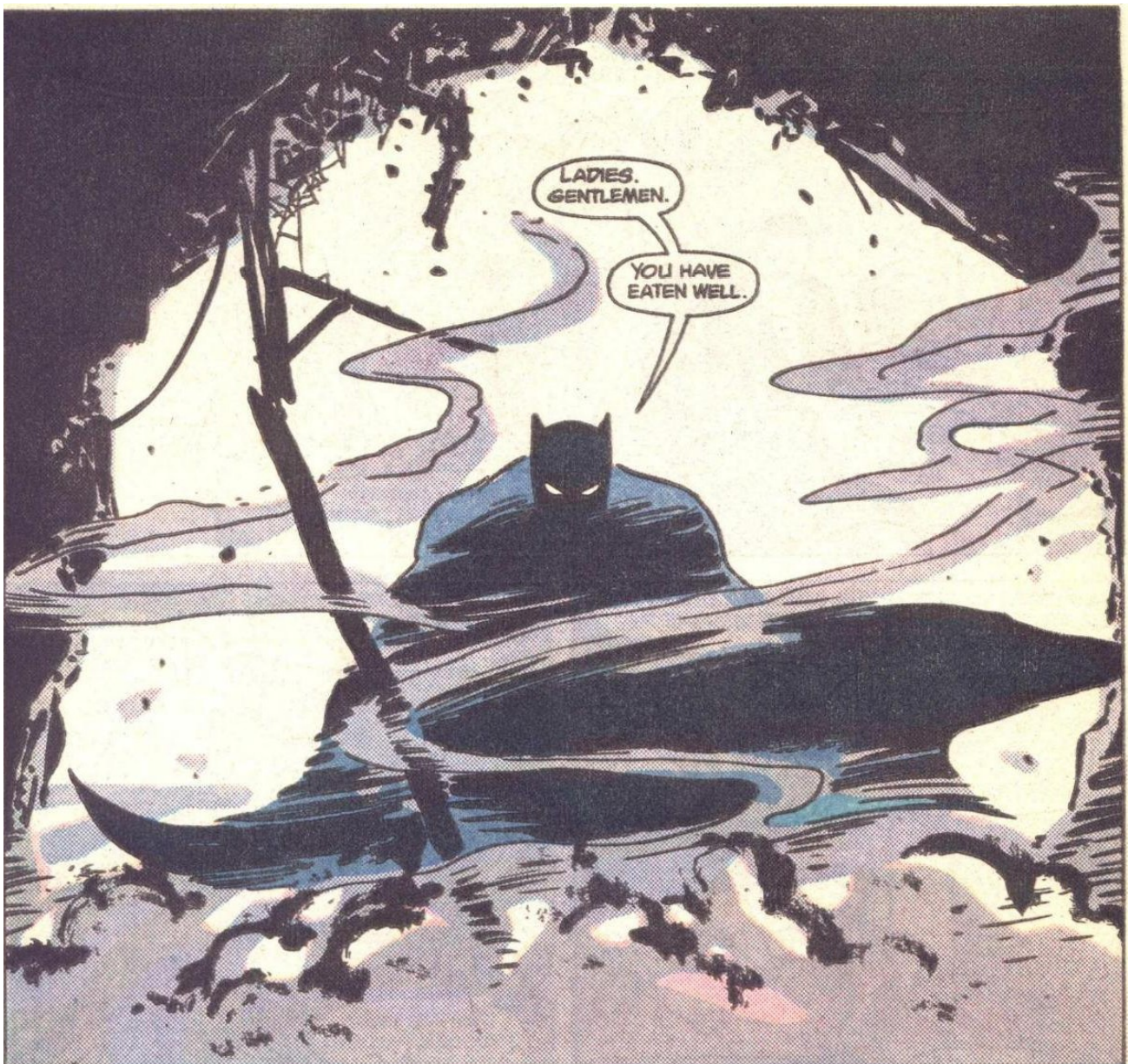
Only half of them are armed.

There's a guard with a machine pistol in the yard...

PFPT







LADIES.
GENTLEMEN.

YOU HAVE
EATEN WELL.



YOU'VE EATEN GOTHAM'S
WEALTH. ITS SPIRIT.

YOUR FEAST
IS NEARLY
OVER.

FROM THIS
MOMENT ON--

--NONE
OF YOU ARE
SAFE.

May 20

-- NO EXCUSES, GORDON.
THAT VIGILANTE GOES UNDER
-- INSTANTLY -- OR IT'S
YOUR JOB!

... YES, SIR ...



June 2



She knows how to walk
in heels.

So few women do, these
days. It's practically a
lost art.

And she knows how to
scream. You could hear it
from the rooftops.



Normally, screaming wouldn't
help. Not in this neighborhood.

Here on the East End, a
midnight walk constitutes
attempted suicide.



Lucky for her that there
are so many cops around.

There's Sergeant Feck,
playing wino...



And hunched in that sedan--
Detectives Shelly and Lerner.

There are six more officers
waiting, crouched in
stoops and garbage
dumpers, down the block.

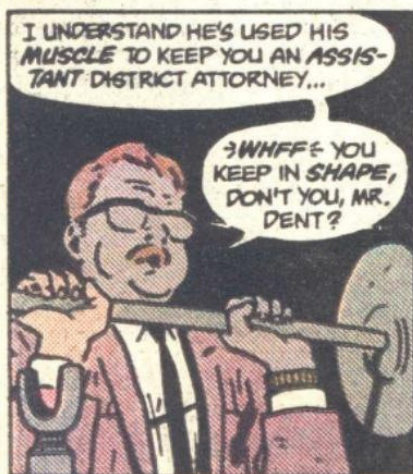
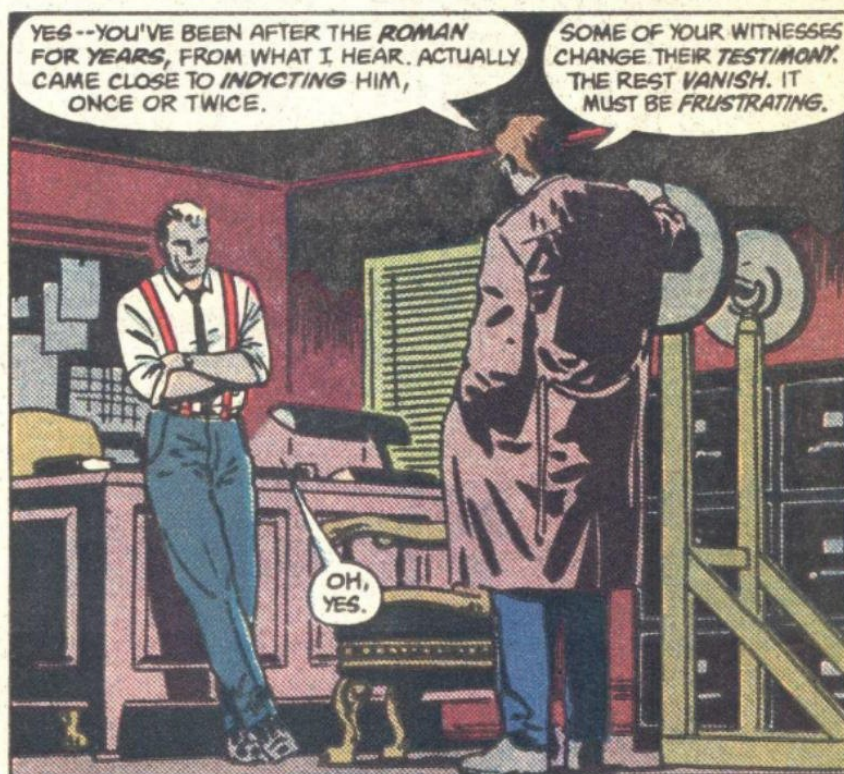


Gordon's wasting a lot
of manpower on these
traps.

June 5



June 6



(CONTINUED ON 200 PAGE 60, FOLLOWING)

Valueimpression
Placeholder



...THOUGHT HE'D NEVER LEAVE.

YOU CAN COME OUT NOW.



ALIBI? DENT HAD ONE ALIBI, ESSEN. FOR EVERY DATE.

SAYS HE WAS HOME BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND FOUR. WITH HIS WIFE. NO POINT IN QUESTIONING HER.

YOU REALLY THINK HE'S BATMAN, LIEUTENANT?



IT'S POSSIBLE. DENT CERTAINLY IS PASSIONATE ENOUGH.

BUT IT'D TAKE MORE THAN MUSCLES TO FIGHT THE WAY BATMAN DOES--OR TO GET AROUND THE WAY HE DOES. AND THOSE WEAPONS...

...I MEAN, HE'S GOT AN ARSENAL. HARD TO AFFORD ON DENT'S SALARY.



MONEY-- LIEUTENANT... BRUCE WAYNE IS THE RICHEST MAN IN GOTHAM--AND--

--BEING FROM OUT OF TOWN, YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW THIS, BUT HIS PARENTS WERE MURDERED. BY A MUGGER, I THINK.

HE WAS JUST A LITTLE BOY AT THE TIME ...



I COULD KISS YOU, ESSEN.

I'm already tasting her lipstick on the cigarette...



...her fingernails bite into my knee--

--that truck-- what the hell--





--damn-- no time--

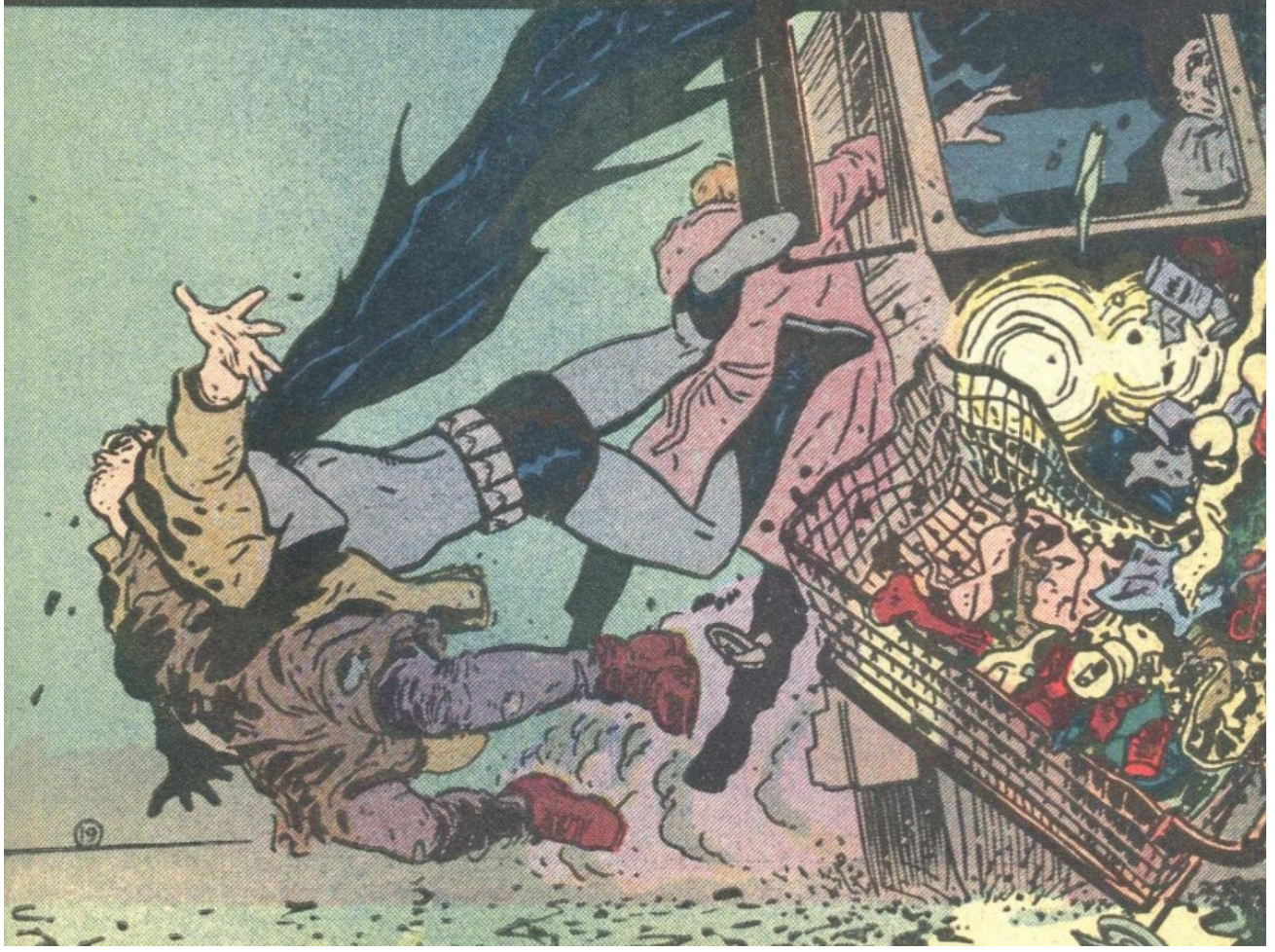
--no time--



--can't reach--

--no time--

--it's over
I've blown
it--





...how long...
have I been
out...?...

...not long...
Essen...



...Essen's
got him...

DON'T MOVE,
YOU.

LIEUTENANT--
YOU ALL RIGHT?

NEVER...
MIND ME...

...DON'T
TAKE YOUR
EYES OFF...



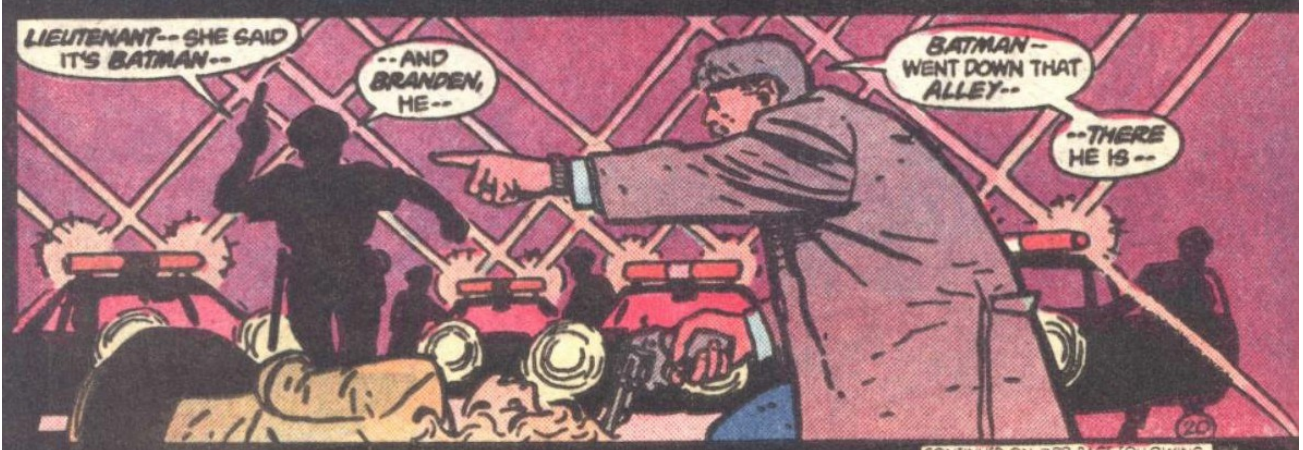
I CALLED FOR
BACK-UP--

NSGG



STOP OR
I'LL...

Fingers
don't work...



LIEUTENANT-- SHE SAID
IT'S BATMAN--

--AND
BRANDEN,
HE--

BATMAN--
WENT DOWN THAT
ALLEY--

--THERE
HE IS--

CONTINUED ON 352 PAGE FOLLOWING



--SAVED THAT OLD WOMAN... HE...

They think--I attacked those cops--opening up--



--catch a bullet in my leg--

--ignore it--

Blind alley--no way out--

--except that window--



--only chance--

--buy me a moment--



NO ONE FIRES WITHOUT MY ORDER--

--GET THE FRONT OF THAT PLACE COVERED--

--MERKEL-- TAKE A SQUAD TO THE ROOF--

LIEUTENANT--IT'S THE COMMISSIONER--



--the roof-- if I can reach it before they do--

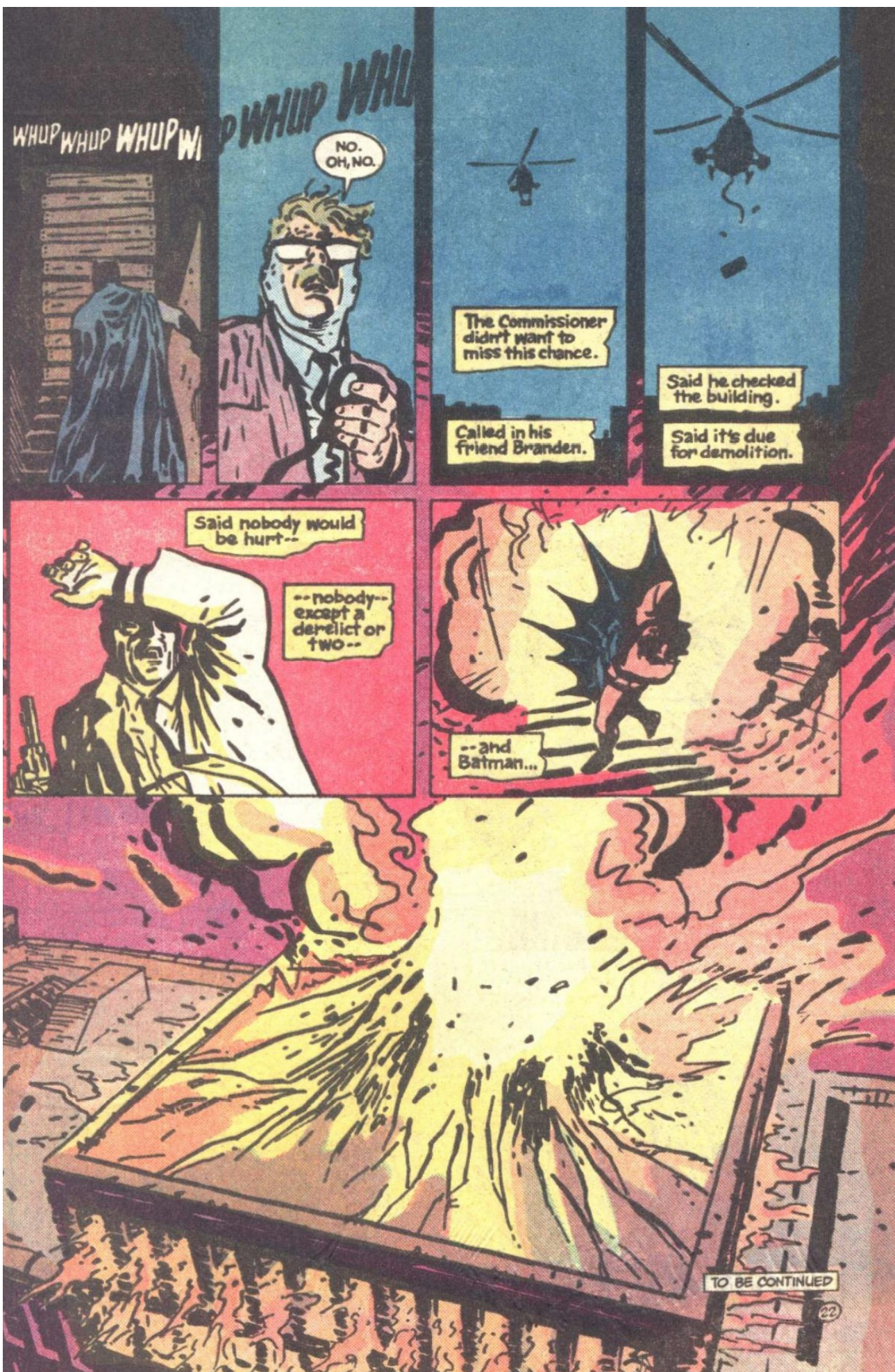
--before they get our support--



--COMMISSIONER, THERE'S NO NEED FOR--

--BATMAN HASN'T ATTACKED ANYBODY--

--COMMISSIONER-- YOU CAN'T LET BRANDEN--





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666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

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Dear Bat-People,

Really liked the Collins/Starlin story in BATMAN #402, but that's a minor point this time out. DC is doing some really great stuff with Bats this year, so good stories are no surprise. My concern for this letter is on a minor detail that's starting to get on my nerves. What's the detail?

Batman's ribs! Everybody and their mother is writing stories where Batman gets his ribs busted in, so much so it's getting to be like the "flesh wound" of the old cowboy movies. The man's ribs are going to be powder pretty soon, or worse yet, what if he punctures a lung? Let the man get shot, gassed, knocked out, but leave Batman's ribs alone for a while!

Please?

Brad Keefauver
207 Rassi Ave.
Morton, IL 61550

Actually, I thought the idea—if you were Batman, that is—was NOT to get shot, gassed, knocked out or kicked in the ribs ... But you're right, Batman's ribs have taken quite a beating lately. We'll try to damage some other part of his anatomy next time. Quick, Watson, hand me the wrench!

Dear Denny,

I for one applaud your changing the Batman back to the grim, dark avenger that he was in the comics of the late 1930s. This is the Batman that I've always wanted and got in the DARK KNIGHT and now in the pages of BATMAN and DETECTIVE comics.

Now for some continuity comments. To begin with, the Batman's appearance in MAN OF STEEL occurred about 1979, and it seemed that he, like Superman, had just begun his crime-fighting career. This would make Dick Grayson 19 years old, if he started in 1980 at the age of 13. This works well, but I am asking to insure that such perfect continuity continues aging the characters realistically. (I'm not asking for silly annual "birthday" issues, however). This lack of aging on the part of Superman, the Batman and Wonder Woman is what started all this multi-verse mess to begin with!

Secondly, I can't envision this Batman joining the JLA or forming the Outsiders. (Not that I want to get rid of the Outsiders; just drop the Batman from their origin and get him out of the JLA!) What does he do: drive to Metropolis or Detroit on the weekends for JLA meetings?

Will Batgirl (or is it "The Batgirl") be returning? Does she still exist? (Yes—see SECRET ORIGINS #16—BJR) (Just because she survived CRISIS doesn't mean she still exists in this "New Earth".) How about Man-Bat? (Maybe.) Will Dick Grayson guest-star? (Possibly.)

I really like this "Mazzucchelli-look" Batman, from his wrinkled boots through his bulky utility belt and up to his slightly curved "ears". Will this uniform stick around? Will he retain the bat on his chest without the yellow oval?

Overall, DC is making wonderful changes since the Crisis. Superman, the GL Corps, and others are or will be better than ever! Just one thing: despite what has been written in CRISIS and LEGENDS, the super-heroes shouldn't remember the Crisis, because it only existed in the multiverse. Now, with only one universe, a Crisis could (and did) never happen. Besides, I'd hate to have the Batman referring to events that never happened—it cheapens the plot.

Ever the Bat-fan—

John LeMaitre
237 S. Fillmore
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Everybody in the DC universe does remember a time of storms and death, referred to as the Crisis. What they don't remember is the presence of heroes eliminated by the revision of the universe. There were quite a few deaths and horrors for them all without the inclusion of the off-world events from CRISIS.

Dear Denny,

I have always enjoyed the scripting of Max Collins' beautifully written Ms. Tree detective stories and his Mike Mist mysteries. I always wanted to see him write for BATMAN, the world's greatest detective! Max delivered a gritty and fast-moving tale that, although not the most original Batman setting, was very enjoyable. All I can ask is that maybe, sometime in the next year, BATMAN can find some time in his very busy schedule to make a date, and better yet a crossover, with Max's glamorous MICHAEL TREE!

I'm also a fan of Jim Starlin and his comic contributions. Unfortunately, I found his art in BATMAN #402 to be ... stiff at best. I noticed that he fell into a trap that many other artists who draw Robin/Jason Todd have fallen into as well. While DICK GRAYSON's hair is parted on the side, JASON's is parted in the middle. Although I think it looks

better parted on the side, I feel this is something that should remain consistent. So for the record, is Jason's hair parted on the side or in the middle?

Here's to the hopeful return of these two creative geniuses!

Chris Romano
16907 Avenida de Santa Ynez
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Jason's hair is parted at the roots. (Sorry—hate to part with a clipped comment like that...)

And then there's the guys who are never satisfied. Ah, the follicle of youth...

Hey, Denny—

Why did you run such a horrid Collins/Starlin story in BATMAN #402?

I mean, while both of these gentlemen have proven their talents many times over the course of their careers, they failed to prove it this time out.

The story was one of the weakest efforts from Max Collins that I've ever read, and Jim Starlin's artwork was laughable, especially the elongated ears on the cowl. Tommy looked more like Bugs Bunny (pg. 23, panel 2) than a dangerous menace.

In short, if I want a weak artistic effort that's attached to a predictable story, I'll buy lots of Marvel comics. See ya next month.

Elvis Orten
Route #4, Box 120
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

NEXT ISSUE: BATMAN VS. THE ROADRUNNER! BUGS VS. BEEP! (With special appearances by Daffy Denny and Babs as the Chipmunk!) Just kidding.

Dear DC Comics Inc.,

I can't wait for BATMAN: YEAR ONE because:

I'M A COLLECTOR*

Comic books had always seemed like "kiddie stuff",

Meant for someone at the age of three;

The stories were so silly, with no reality...

Far removed from all that they could be.

But then I saw DARK KNIGHT!

Now I'm a collector!

And Batman's fight
Has pulled me right in!

I'm in love...

I'm a collector,

I couldn't reject it

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If I tried!

Comic books had always seemed "the same old thing";

If the art was good, they lacked a plot.

What's the use in buying, when it's all the same?

But then Frank Miller played, and changed the game!

That's when I read DARK KNIGHT!

Now I'm a collector!

And DC's right

On top with this one!

I'm in love...

I'm a collector

I couldn't deflect it

If I tried...

* To the tune of "I'm a Believer" by Neil Diamond, as performed by the Monkees.

Janet L. Hetherington

420 Gloucester St. Apt. 403

Ottawa, Ontario

CANADA K1R 7T7

Yeah! Written on Batman stationery, no less! The next letter came in too late for last month's lettercol, and since I was admonished for picking out all the negative letters on BATMAN #401 to run in that lettercol, (I overcompensated for being personally involved...), here's a late comment on that issue:

To the Editor:

I am sending a letter to you guys at last, after twenty years of privately going wild over Batman comic books, because something to publicly go wild over just happened. There have been dashing, original female characters in BATMAN since its first issue—usually villains—but never before has a BATMAN story been written by a female. It took 401 issues to get to that; but "A Bird in the Hand" was worth the wait. Great title, even.

I have read a lot of articles and engaged in much debate recently over women's place in comics (as writers; artists; villains, or whatever), and have come away from the subject with mixed emotions of boredom and disgust. The comics that are aimed at the female market put me to sleep, and nobody seems to feel that women have any business writing or drawing the super-heroes—unless the super-hero is also a woman. Until Barbara J. Randall popped up out of ... well, where did she come from? ... with her story, there seemed to be no place on this scene for a female fanboy.

The girly comics make my skin crawl, always have, because they are celebrations of the mediocre. Everybody has to be just like you and me—just like you, maybe; not like me! Any flamboyant, talented or headstrong character in a girly comic is bound to be the antagonist who gets taught a lesson. That kind of indoctrination is sicker than the goriest fight scene could ever be.

Comic readers who fancy themselves enlightened and mature are whining loudly about the super-hero genre, using all the arguments that Ms. Randall gives to G. Gordon Godfrey in her story, but no other genre has ever sold millions of comics, and there's a good reason for that. Comic books present a mythology. A comic book that doesn't knock its readers

flat with a vision of glory is just so much designer toilet paper—it isn't worth a damn.

Women's real achievements in the comics industry will come when they take control of the great heroes, like Batman, and write or draw memorable stories that influence the fans—including the next generation of writers and artists.

That is not to say women wouldn't bring an odd angle or two into the genre. Odd angles are what the genre needs; mythology thrives on fresh interpretations of ageless material. If the same bunch of guys keep at it too long, the conventions petrify into fossils and the party moves elsewhere.

There is one scene in BATMAN #401 that no male writer, not even Alan Moore, has approached: the scene in which Robin accidentally pulls off the top of Maggie's costume and is so embarrassed that he lets her get away. For years I have wondered how female characters managed to either prevent or commit crimes in stiletto heels and deep décolletage; it isn't the sexism implicit in such outfits that bothers me, it's the stupidity. Only a bozo would run through the city at 3 AM dressed like that! Robin's confusion is authentic and hilarious.

There's also a lot of gender-free good stuff in this story, and I feel a sort of proprietary pride in it, almost as if I'd written it myself. Frankly, I never would have thought you'd allow a woman such a prominent BATMAN feature—first LEGENDS Crossover and all that—but you've done it now, haven't you?

Congratulations to Barbara J. Randall, and to everyone else involved.

Page Davis

Townhouse Apt. 13-L

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Thanks. As for the story of where I came from, it was the sister lettercol to this one, in DETECTIVE comics. Some guy named Giordano asked for suggestions on how DC's female characters could be improved, and boy did I have stuff to say about that ... It only took me six letters to end up on this side of the col (to simplify the last five years a great deal...), so if you all get started now ... maybe I'll be editing your scripts someday. Until then, why not write us a letter on this issue? See you next month. (That's BAT-MAIL, c/o DC COMICS, INC., 666 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10103)

—Barbara

FROM THE DEN

For months, I had been looking for a creative team to assume the Batman chores after Frank Miller and David Mazzucchelli finish Year One. A lot of names were mentioned—virtually every name that belongs to an established professional or the kind of newcomer who might be able to provide the kind of brooding, moody storytelling that characterizes the classic Batman.

The writer I was seeking had to be a competent plotter—plots are as much a part of the Batman mythos as mood and character—and it would help if he had a feel for the grotesque, the eerie, the odd. A sense of justice would help. And I

certainly wouldn't mind if he had a knowledge of comics history in general and Batman history in particular. Reliability would be a nice trait for him to have. And he had, absolutely had, to have an ability to write obsessed heroes.

Right under my nose. The proofs to Batman #403. Right next to that, my Rolodex with a fresh entry under the C card: Max Allan Collins.

Just a couple of issues back, I used part of this space to tell you about Max's accomplishments as the scripter of the Dick Tracy comic strip for the past nine years; the writer and co-creator of *Mo'Nero*, a comic book published by Eclipse; and as the award-winning mystery novelist. (*The Million Dollar Wound* is the latest Collins I've read, and I recommend it.) So I won't go over all that again. For those of you who came in late, I will mention that Max did two issues for us; I liked them and, judging from the mail, you did, too. There was only one logical question left to be answered: would Max care to write Batman regularly?

The Rolodex was right there.

Five minutes later, I had my answer. Although nobody thought of the stories in Batman #402 and #403 as auditions at the time, that's what they turned out to be. I was pleased with Max and, as he told me on the phone, he was delighted with Batman.

I had my writer.

I still lacked an artist.

Again, the parade of names, of possibilities—an exercise in frustration. Of course, there was that one guy, the one I'd worked with at the Great Big Company ... He did great cityscapes—wonderfully dark, film-noir-ish stuff—and a fine caped hero. That hero was called Moon Knight, and despite what some fans were saying, he was not really much like our Caped Crusader, but the work, and the artist's very obvious intelligence, indicated he had the raw equipment to do a very good Batman—maybe better than very good. But the grapevine had it that he was committed to other projects through the middle of next year sometime. Still, what the hey, it was worth a phone call.

Actually, it took several calls. My man had moved. I finally reached him in Oregon, where he'd gone to escape the horrors of northeastern summer. (I mentioned that he's intelligent?) He did have commitments—the good ones always do—but he'd learn if they were negotiable and, more important, he'd commune with his soul to find out if he really wanted to take on something as demanding as Batman. He'd let me know.

The answer, when it finally came, was yes.

His name is Chris Warner and it is not the best known name in comics. At least not yet. But give it a year.

Max and Chris have already had several long conversations. Each has told me how excited he is to be teamed with the other, and together they've hatched some plans that have me excited.

I'll tell you about them next issue.

Denny